Loopholes in Debt Recovery Tribunals

*290. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the existing loopholes in the system of Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRTs);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by Government to plug these loopholes; and

(d) the steps taken for speedy disposal of cases by DRTs?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) The Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 (DRT Act) was amended in the year 2000 to remove certain legal anomalies observed during the course of implementation of the Act, as also to strengthen the Debt Recovery Tribunals. The amendments *inter alia* related to:

(i) set-off and counter claims, appointment of Receivers and Commissioners by the Tribunals, transfer of cases from one Tribunal to another and appointment of more than one Recovery Officer in a Tribunal;

(ii) empowering the Tribunals of issue certificate for recovery of enhanced or reduced amount on the basis of the final order of the Appellate Tribunal;

(iii) empowering the Chairperson of the Appellate Tribunal to appraise the work of Presiding Officers of Tribunals and discharge functions of the Chairperson of another Appellate Tribunal;

(iv) the transfer of recovery certificate from one Tribunal to another Tribunal to facilitate recovery;

(v) empowering the Tribunals to distribute sale proceeds among the secured creditors in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act.

The amended Act has since been notified. Consequently, DRT rules have also been modified which would be notified soon. Further measures to streamline the functioning of DRTs would be considered as and when the need arises.

(d) The following steps have been taken for speedy disposal of cases by DRTs:—

i) Constitution of 15 more DRTs since 1st April, 2000 thereby taking the total number of DRTs in the country to 29;

ii) Increasing the staff strength of DRTs;

iii) Further delegation of administrative and financial powers to Presiding Officers to improve their functioning;

iv) Arranging adequate infrastructure for DRTs;

v) Close coordination between DRTs and Banks/FIs; and

vi) Office computerization in DRTs.

Phasing out of Haj subsidies

*293. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal for phasing out subsidies and Government support to Haj pilgrims;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the subsidies, support and concessions granted to pilgrims to different shrines and places of religious importance?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Proposals have been received both for phasing out and maintaining Government subsidy on Haj pilgrimage. No final view has been taken on this issue.

(c) For Haj pilgrimage, Government makes arrangements for their air travel from India to Saudi Arabia for which pilgrims are charged Haj fare at a subsidised rate. For Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, Government partially defrays the expenditure incurred by Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam on the boarding and lodging for the pilgrims. For these pilgrimages, Government